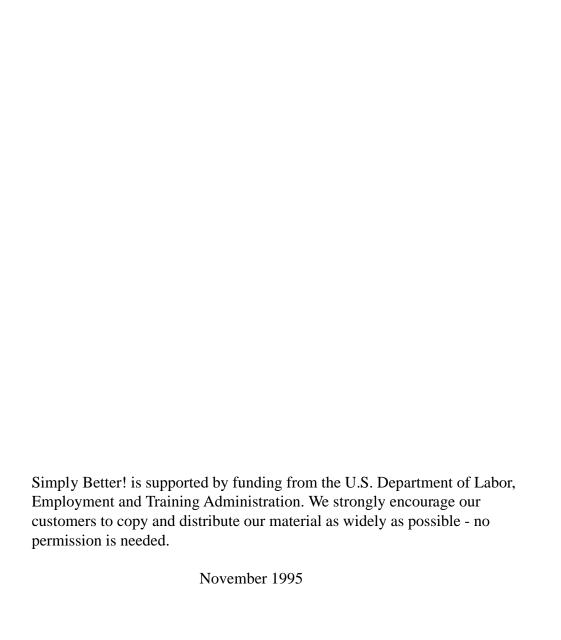
# Self-Assessment System

# **Overview**

Exploring Your Organization for Opportunities to Improve



# Doing what you do **Better and Better!**

- This is what continuous improvement is all about. *Doing what you do better and better.*
- Understanding and meeting customer requirements. *Always*.
- Understanding your services and processes. *At every level*.
- Understanding how your organization works. *As a complex system.*

# This means taking Action.

Continuous improvement is a never-ending, challenging, and invigorating process. It can also be a daunting one. Simply Better! will help you meet this challenge!

# The Self-Assessment System Overview

Simply Better! is a movement of employment and training professionals and organizations committed to continuously improving their services and outcomes by reflecting and acting on what truly satisfies their customers.

Continuous improvement will help your organization meet the needs of your customers. The ability to do this depends on continuously improving all of the processes that contribute to providing services and producing the results which satisfy your customers - program participants and employers.

The essential quality of the organization - providing something of value to the customer - depends on the successful functioning of each of its key parts in interaction with all the other parts. Systemic change takes selfunderstanding, planning, and commitment to pursuing new ways of doing business.

# Simply Better's products will help you to learn, grow, and act to improve.

The Self-Assessment System will help your organization to understand how it functions at a deeper level than you thought possible.

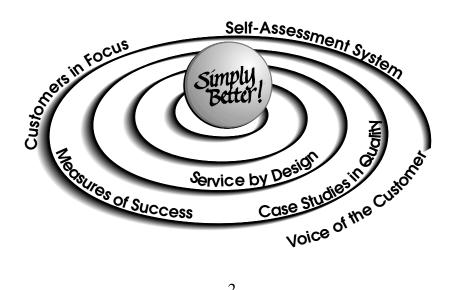
The Voice of the Customer will teach you how to use customer input and feedback tools to make real change.

**Service by Design** will give you a seven-step process for solving problems starting with the customers' needs.

Measures of Success will help you create meaningful measures of your performance.

**Customers in Focus** will guide you through running and using the results of focus groups.

Case Studies in Quality will provide you with examples of continuous improvement in organizations like yours.



# The Self-Assessment System Overview

The Self-Assessment System is made up of nine booklets. As with any complex system, these booklets will accomplish little if used individually, but taken together they are much greater than the sum of their parts.

# Overview to the Self-Assessment System

This booklet explains the basic concept of continuous improvement, how self-asssessment fits into a continuous improvement framework, and how the Simply Better! Self-Assessment System is structured. It also contains the Preview, a fifteen-minute mini-assessment which will help you understand the subjects covered under continuous improvement. A glossary of continuous improvement terms will make the system easier to use, and a brief, annotated bibliography lists the books we have found to be exceptionally useful or enlightening.

## The Seven Dimension Workbooks

These seven workbooks, one for each of the seven dimensions, include a description of the subjects covered in the dimension, what a world-class organization might look like, important terms and concepts, and all of the questions, exercises and scoring tables a team will need to complete the assessment. The seven dimension workbooks are:

- Customer Focus and Satisfaction
- Information and Analysis
- Human Resource Development
- Quality and Results

- Leadership
- Strategic Planning
- Management of Process Quality

# **Guidebook for Conducting the Self-Assessment**

This booklet contains complete instructions for conducting the self-assessment. It includes tools and exercises for choosing a coordinator, facilitator(s), and observer; planning the self-assessment from beginning to end; and running the self-assessment. It also has useful hints and examples, drawn from the experiences of our field test sites, and a resource guide.

**Simply Better's Self-Assessment System** will help your organization understand the model for continuous improvement, conduct a self-assessment, identify key areas for quality improvement, and begin taking action for change.

# Who Can Use The Self-Assessment?

Every employment and training organization, regardless of size, can implement quality. Every employment and training organization can benefit from using this system. These concepts are used world-wide by some of the world's largest corporations, as well as by some of your community's smallest manufacturers, service providers, schools, and government agencies. The terms used in the system have been tailored for employment and training providers, but the concepts and the benefits of continuous improvement are universal.

Are you . . .

Large

Urban

RURAL

Small

A service delivery area
A one-stop center
An employment service office

a Community College

A community-based organization

A local workforce development organization a Nationwide Training Contractor

an enterprise Member

A Pioneer

A novice at Quality and continuous improvement a struggling performer an award winner

**The Simply Better!** Self-Assessment System (S-A-S) has the flexibility to be used by any size or type of employment and training organization. Continuous improvement systems can function at any level of sophistication. This means that organizations at the cutting edge and organizations just starting out have just as much to learn.

The S-A-S is based on the model of continuous improvement used by the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, the President's Quality Award, and numerous prestigious state quality awards. The key concepts that underlie the success of world-class business organizations apply equally to the deliverers of public services, including those of us in the employment and training field.

# Continuous Improvement

Everyone wants to satisfy their customers. Everyone wants to achieve exceptional results. Achieving both requires an organization which can perform consistently, which can innovate, and which can react quickly to a changing environment. It also requires a motivated, committed, and passionate workforce. Continuous improvement is a way of life in such organizations.

Part of continuous improvement is the breakthrough: the improvement which dramatically improves quality, saves money, or reduces cycle time. The major redesign of a service, a new computer system, simplified paperwork: all are major changes which can have dramatic effects. This is the **improvement** side of continuous improvement.

The **continuous** side is far more important to long-term success. It is the little things, the everyday changes and improvements which, over time, make the biggest difference. Every member of the organization should be looking continuously for opportunities for improvement, and should be working to make them happen. The Japanese call this *Kaizen* - reaching the target not by waiting for innovative leaps, but by starting immediately to improve what can be improved, and doing it forever.

Fundamental cultural change is a slow, often exasperating process. Continuous improvement cannot become a part of the organizational culture overnight. Given time, however, making improvement part of daily work life, eliminating problems at their source, and working with passion and commitment can become the standard in your organization.

Kaizen • reaching the target not by waiting for innovative leaps, but by starting immediately to improve what can be improved, and doing it forever.

A continuously improving organization exhibits its commitment through its strength in seven important dimensions:

**Customers** are highly valued and respected; and quality is defined and judged by the customer.

**Leadership** sets direction and creates a customer orientation with clear and visible values and high expectations.

The organization maintains a strong future orientation with **planning** occurring for both short- and long-term changes.

**Employees** are valued, empowered, supported, and recognized for their involvement and accomplishments.

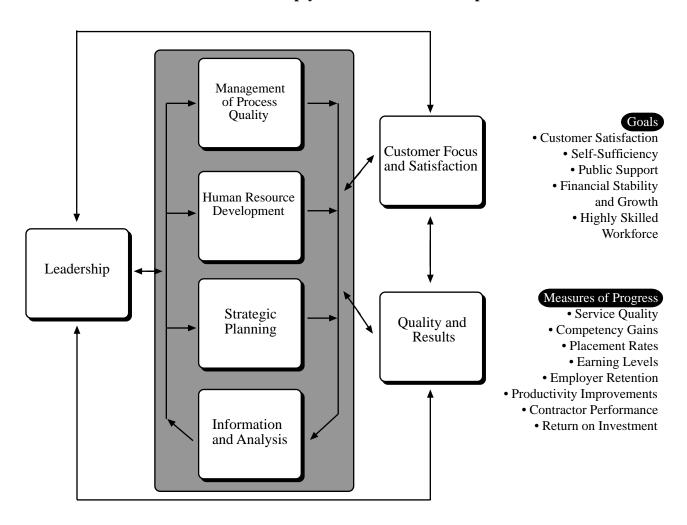
All decisions are made based on reliable **information**, data, and analysis.

**Quality** is designed into processes and services, based on the needs and expectations of customers.

The organization's performance system focuses on **results**.

Continuous improvement is a never-ending, cyclical process. The Simply Better! process is similar to many others: *Leadership* helps define the goals of *Customer Focus and Satisfaction* as well as measures of *Quality and Results*. These three elements form the context in which the *Management of Process Quality, Strategic Planning*, and *Human Resource Development* take place. *Information and Analysis* flows throughout.

# **The Simply Better! Continuous Improvement Process**



These dimensions all make up the whole: they interact with each other, guide each other, and help make success possible.

# Continuous Improvement - Why Do It?

It takes a serious commitment to become a high-performing, continuously-improving organization. Large corporations may spend millions of dollars and a decade of hard work to undertake massive cultural changes. Smaller companies also make major commitments of their resources: time, energy, and money. Today, more and more public sector organizations, including some of the most successful employment and training service providers in the country, have started down the road to continuous quality improvement.

Some benefits to becoming a continuously improving organization

Do a better job for your customers

Get better results and higher customer satisfaction

Feel better about going to work

Feel more ownership, sense of accomplishment, and passion

**Energize your organization** 

Unlock the talent, creativity and commitment of your workforce

Strengthen your community

Become a leader in pulling together organizations and resources

Do more with less

Use your resources more effectively

Compete and survive

Win support from customers, taxpayers, and funding sources

Provide better services to customers

Become more responsive, more customer focused, and more effective

Today, more and more public sector organizations, including some of the most successful employment and training service providers in the country, have started down the road to continuous quality improvement.

# Continuous Improvement is Doing what you do **Better and Better!**

# The Self-Assessment System

Once your organization has made the decision to embark on the journey of continuous improvement, how should you begin? Some organizations have one or two areas which they know need work. Others have a general sense that things could be a lot better.

The decision of where to start is a daunting one - especially since there are countless aspects of being a continuously improving organization. The old adage applies here, however: *if you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there.* 

The first step to becoming a continuously improving organization is to understand your strengths and opportunities relative to continuous improvement. This requires some rigor, but is a very achievable goal. An organizational self-assessment will give you the information you need, in an orderly, relevant, and accurate manner, to begin the journey of continuous improvement.

As with all parts of a continuous improvement process, the self-assessment is a challenging, time consuming venture. Of course, if it were simple and quick, it would be of very limited value.

"beneficial. fascinating, productive, enlightening, organizational teambuilding, exciting, tense, intense, positive, in-depth, different, frustrating, constantly challenging, timely, revealing, time consuming, eve opening"

-what the field tests said about their selfassessment experiences

Some benefits to undertaking a self-assessment process

#### Develop a plan for the future

Know where improvements can be made and how to make them

#### **Build support in your community**

Demonstrate quality, business-like rigor, and results

# **Empower the workforce**

Focus the system around empowered teams

## Increase energy, commitment and passion

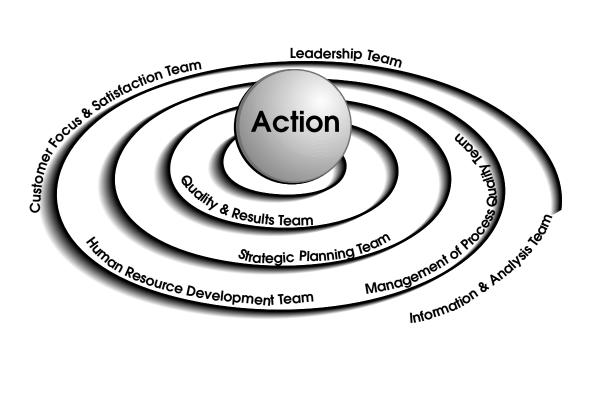
Invigorate and energize the entire staff

## Track progress over time

See growth and improvement through easy-to-use tracking systems

# How the Self-Assessment System is Structured

The self-assessment process is designed to gather a large amount of information, understand what it means, rate it on a continuous improvement scoring scale, and, most importantly, develop a plan for action.



For each of the seven dimensions, a team will go through an easy-to-follow process of *answering* questions, *scoring*, *brainstorming* strengths and areas of opportunity, *discussing and ranking* the opportunities, and *planning* for change.

Opportunities for improvement will be brought together when all of the dimensions teams are finished. The organization overall will begin planning for the future and **taking action**.

# **Helpful Hints**

Self-assessments do not succeed on their own. In addition to many hours of hard work, there needs to be a real commitment by senior management to support the process through the self-assessment and beyond. Without management's long-term commitment to continuous improvement, your staff can easily become disillusioned and cynical. This is not a decision to be made lightly!

These helpful hints come directly from our field test sites' experiences:

# Must-Do's

- Buy-in by management is essential.
- All staff should participate whenever possible.
- Action plans should relate to the areas covered in one of the seven dimensions. The actions must be do-able, realistic, involve all staff to some extent, be measurable, and be reported on a regular basis.
- Success should be reported, both inside and outside of the organization.

# **Pit-Falls**

- Initial management buy-in but no long-term support.
- Action plans are shot down, disempowering the staff.
- Results are not shared with all staff.
- Staff are too busy to carry out the actions.
- "Finger pointing" behaviors continue to exist.

# The Self-Assessment Preview

The Preview will give you a quick overview of what continuous improvement and self-assessment are all about. It is most effective if several people (maybe even everyone!) spend an hour or so filling out the seven dimensions and then coming together as a group to discuss them.

A complete self-assessment is a major undertaking, which requires a significant commitment of time and resources. The Preview can also provide valuable information when getting ready for a full-scale self-assessment. It will help to create common understanding of the important terms and concepts and to identify those that may be cause for misunderstanding as the process proceeds.

Don't get discouraged if you don't do well! The Preview and the Self-Assessment System do not measure how well you meet traditional performance standards, or your commitment to excellence or service, or how efficiently you meet your objectives. Rather, they are tools to help you see the sophistication of the continuous improvement processes you already have in place. This is a relatively new art - almost no one had these tools twenty years ago, and virtually no public sector organizations could call themselves world-class when rated on these scales. This does not mean that the tools are not useful.

Many organizations will be surprised to find that areas where they thought they were strong they are not, and in other areas they have unexpected strengths. Other organizations will find ways to track progress over time by using this as a goal-setting as well as an evaluation tool.

# How to Complete the Preview

The Preview is extremely easy to fill out - it takes most people about fifteen or twenty minutes.

# Step One

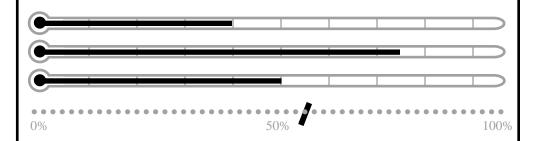
Individually or as a team, decide where your organization falls along the thermometer. This is a continuum, so don't be afraid to locate yourself anywhere along the thermometer.

# Step Two

Using a crayon or marker, fill in the thermometer up to the point on the scale which best matches your organization. Remember, this is a subjective judgment, so precision is impossible!

# Step Three

For each section, mark the average score on the bottom scale. You may want to eyeball the average length of the lines to come up with a score, or you may want to compute the average. Again, because this is subjective, precise scoring is not necessary.



In this example, the score is about 55%, which is very good! Most organizations seriously involved in quality and continuous improvement can expect to fall in the 40% - 60% range. Even nationally recognized award winners rarely score above 75% across all categories.

# Customer Focus and Satisfaction

Customer Focus and Satisfaction examines your organization's knowledge of customer requirements and how relationships with customers are established and maintained.

# **Customer Expectations**

The organization seeks to understand customers' needs and expectations.



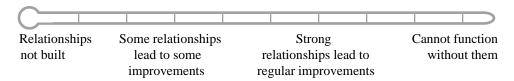
# **Customer Service Standards**

The organization has customer service standards which are communicated to and understood by all staff.

No standards	To some extent	Developed and	Cannot
		communicated for many	function without
		processes and transactions	them

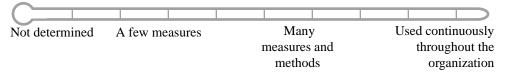
# **Customer Relationship Management**

The organization builds relationships with customers, and uses the information to improve those relationships as well as processes and services.



# **Determining Customer Satisfaction**

The organization uses methods and measures to determine its customers' satisfaction.



#### **Customer Satisfaction Results**

The organization measures customer satisfaction (and dissatisfaction) and compares its results to those of other organizations.

Does not	Measures	Makes comparisons	Consistently
measure	satisfaction but makes no	with other service	outperforms most
satisfaction	comparisons	providers	or all similar
			organizations
• • • • • • •	• • • • • • • • • • • • • •	• • • • • • • • • • • •	• • • • • • • • • • •
0%		50%	100%

# World Class Organizations

Quality is judged by customers. The key focus of the organization is the products and services that customers value and that lead to customer satisfaction and future preference.

Value, satisfaction, and preference may be influenced by many factors. These factors include the organization's relationships which help to build trust, confidence, and loyalty of customers.

Customer-driven quality is a strategic concept. It is directed toward customer retention and expansion. It demands constant sensitivity to customer requirements and the measurement of the factors that drive customer satisfaction and retention.

# Leadership

# World Class Organizations

Senior leaders create and reinforce a clear vision and values, set goals and high expectations, and recognize employee contributions. Reinforcement of the values and expectations requires personal commitment and involvement.

Senior leaders take part in the creation of the strategies, systems and methods for achieving excellence and building capabilities which guide all activities and decisions of the organization.

Senior leaders are committed to the development of the vision for their workforce and community and encourage participation and creativity by all staff.

Through their personal involvement in activities such as planning, communications, performance review, and recognition of staff achievements, senior leaders serve as role models, reinforcing the values and encouraging leadership and initiative.

Leadership examines the involvement of your organization's senior leaders in creating and sustaining a focus on 'customer,' making commitments to ever-higher levels of quality, and fostering a management system to guide the organization toward quality excellence.

# **Senior Leadership**

Senior leaders involve themselves in creating and reinforcing vision and values, setting goals, reviewing performance, and recognizing staff contributions.

No real	Occurs	Occurs	Part of
commitment	occasionally	frequently	everyday activity

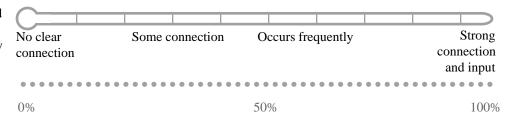
# **Leadership System and Organization**

The organization's focus on customer and high performance objectives are translated into performance requirements for managers and work units.

No clear	Provides	Provides	Strong connection
connection	some direction	substantial direction	to all requirements

# **Public Responsibility and Citizenship**

The organization includes public responsibilities in performance improvement practices and contributes as a responsible citizen in our community.

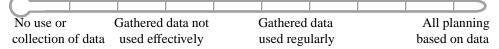


# Information and Analysis

Information and Analysis examines your organization's use and management of valid data and information to drive excellence and to improve overall performance.

# Management of Information and Data

The types of data and information the organization uses for planning and management are constantly improved and drives excellence.



# **Comparisons and Benchmarking**

The organization continuously collects data on world or national leaders in and out of the field and consistently uses the information to improve quality and overall performance.

No use or	Anecdotal	Data from	Data regularly
collection of data	data collected	leaders in the field	collected from leaders
		collected and used	outside the field
			and used

## **Analysis and Use of Data**

The organization's approaches to aggregate and use various types of data support continuous improvement, quality services, customer satisfaction, and high operational performance.

No use or	Gathered data	Data collected	Cannot
collection of data	not used effectively	and used regularly	function without
			quality data
• • • • • • • • •			• • • • • • • • • • • •

# World Class Organizations

Performance management is built on a framework of measurement, information data, and analysis.

Measures come from the organization's strategy and encompass all key processes and the outputs and results of those processes.

Data is collected about all aspects of the organization and analysis of the data supports decision making at all levels.

Information and analysis support planning, reviewing performance, improving operations, comparing performance with "best practices" benchmarks, and more.

A system of measures and indicators tied to customer and organizational performance requirements represents a clear and objective basis for aligning all activities with the organization's goals.

# The Self-Assessment System Overview

# Strategic Planning

# World Class Organizations

High quality outcomes require a strong future orientation and a willingness to make long-term commitments to all stakeholders — customers, staff, contractors, the public, and the community.

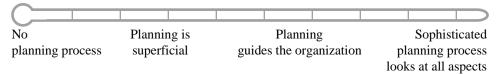
Planning is the means to anticipate many types of changes including those that may affect customers' expectations of services, technological developments, evolving regulatory requirements, and community expectations.

Short- and long-term operating plans, strategies, and resource allocations need to reflect commitments of and changes in the organization.

Strategic Planning examines your organization's planning process and how all key quality requirements are integrated into overall organizational planning.

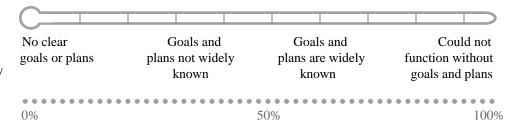
# **Strategy Development**

The organization has a highly developed process for determining short-term (1-2 years) and long-term (3 years or more) strategies and operating plans to achieve leadership in customer satisfaction and overall organizational improvement.



# **Strategy Deployment**

The goals and plans for short- and long-term are used in all units for process management and they are continuously improved.



# **Human Resource Development**

Human Resource Development examines the effectiveness of your organization's efforts to develop and realize the full potential of the workforce, including management.

# **Human Resource Planning and Evaluation**

Human resource planning and practices support quality leadership and improved overall performance.

No plans	Plans unrelated	Plans relevant	Plans
-		and supportive	strongly linked

# **High Performance Work Systems**

The organization's work and job design create opportunities for all employees to contribute effectively to organizational goals.

No	Opportunities for	Many opportunities	
oportunities	a few employees to	for employees to	Cannot function
	contribute effectively	contribute effectively	without them

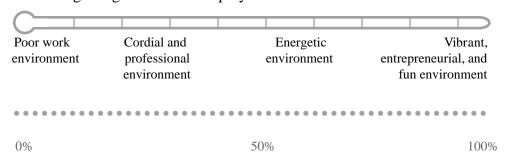
# **Employee Education, Training and Development**

The organization makes full use of education and training to meet key performance objectives.

Education and	Some education	Most education and	Education and
training needs	and training tied to	training focused on	training continuously
not determined	performance objectives	meeting objectives	focused on objectives

# **Employee Well-Being and Satisfaction**

Labor and management maintain a work environment conducive to the well-being and growth of all employees.



# World Class Organizations

Success in improving performance depends on the skills and motivation of the workforce.

Employee success requires meaningful opportunities to learn, practice new skills, and contribute to performance objectives.

Increasingly, training, development and work organizations should be tailored to a more diverse workforce and to more flexible, high performance work practices.

Major challenges in the area of workforce development include the integration and alignment of human resource management with vision, goals, operational plans, and strategic change processes.

Addressing these challenges requires learning new ways of aligning employee and performance data with objectives and strategic plans.

# Management of Process Quality

Management of Process Quality examines the systematic processes your organization uses to improve the quality of its key services, service delivery, and overall performance.

# World Class Organizations

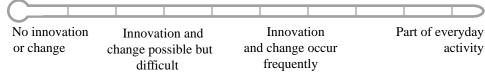
Management places strong emphasis on design quality; problem and waste prevention are achieved through building quality into key services and service delivery processes.

Continuous improvement emphasizes interventions upstream at the early stages in processes. The approach is embedded in the way an organization functions: improvement is part of the daily work of all work units; improvement processes seek to eliminate problems at their source; and improvement is driven by opportunities to do better.

Improvement is driven not only by the goal of providing better services, but also by the need to be responsive and efficient. To meet these objectives, continuous improvement must contain planning cycles.

# **Design and Introduction of Services**

New and/or improved services are developed to ensure higher quality and improved performance.



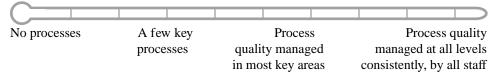
# **Service Delivery**

Key processes (such as assessment, training, and placement) are managed for quality and improved.

No processes	A few key	Process	Process quality
_	processes	quality managed	managed at all levels
		in most key areas	consistently, by all staff

## **Administrative Services**

Key administrative processes are managed so that current requirements are met and quality and performance are continuously improved.



#### **Contractor Performance**

The quality of services, performance, and customer satisfaction furnished by contractors is assured and improved.

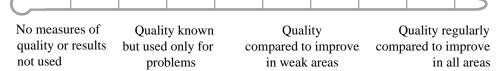
Quality unknown or no system in place	Quality improved when problems arise	Quality improved on a regular basis	Strong relationship with contractors to improve quality
0%	• • • • • • • • • • •	50%	100%

# Quality and Results

Quality and Results examines your organization's achievements based on service quality and end results.

# **Service Quality Results**

The organization measures service quality and compares its results to those of other organizations.



# **Outcome Results**

The organization measures outcomes and compares its results to those of other organizations.

No measures	Outcomes	Outcomes	Outcomes
of outcome or	known but used only	compared to improve	regularly compared
results not used	for problems	in weak areas	to improve in
			all areas

## **Contractor Performance**

The organization measures contractor performance and compares its results to those of other similar providers.

Performance not measured or results not used	Performance known but used only for problems	Performance compared to improve in weak areas	Performance regularly compared to improve in all areas
0%	• • • • • • • • • •	50%	100%

# **W**orld Class Organizations

Results are guided by the interests of all stakeholders: customers, staff, contractors, partners, elected officials, and the community.

To meet sometimes conflicting and changing aims, organizational strategy needs to explicitly address all stakeholder requirements.

The use of a balanced mix of performance indicators offers an effective means to communicate requirements, to monitor actual performance, and to generate support for improving results.

Benchmarking is an important aspect in the focus on results. This involves finding and modeling leading national and world organizations who perform similar functions, in and out of the field.

# Key Terms and Concepts

# Benchmarking

The continuous process of assessing, measuring, and comparing your services, functions, and practices to those of world class organizations, both inside and outside your field.

# **Continuous Improvement**

Doing what you do better and better. A systematic, organized, yet flexible effort to achieve gains in quality, productivity, speed, and cost. Improvement to a system, process, or service that is gradual and ongoing. Continuous improvement can also refer to breakthrough improvement.

#### Contractor

An entity which is under agreement to deliver a specified set of goods or services within defined price and time limits.

#### Customer

The people, organizations, or groups receiving the products or services of your organization. In the S-A-S, customers are job-seekers and employers, the direct beneficiaries of local workforce development services.

## **Customer-Driven Quality**

Consistently meeting and/or exceeding the everincreasing needs and expectations of the customer.

# **Customer Satisfaction**

The degree to which your organization meets or exceeds the needs and expectations of those you serve.

# **Customer Surveys**

Means to determine how well a process or organization is meeting customer requirements. Such surveys help you focus your improvement efforts.

#### **Customer Transaction**

The interaction, or act of contact, between an organization and its customer. Frontline staff are a common point of personal interaction in a local workforce development organization.

## Cycle Time

The time required to perform a process; for example, the time needed to fill a vacancy after receiving a job listing from an employer.

# **Employee Involvement**

Providing employees with opportunities to participate in planning and decision making processes which traditionally have been reserved for management.

# **High Performance Organization**

Organizations that value and act on four basic tenents: focus on customer, employee involvement in decision-making, support for teamwork, and commitment to continuous improvement.

# Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award

An annual award to recognize U.S. companies for business excellence and quality achievement. Awards may be given in each of three eligibility categories: manufacturing, service, and small businesses. The award program is managed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, an agency of the Department of Commerce. Assistance in administering the program is provided by the American Society for Quality Control.

#### **Organization**

The entity identified for the self-assessment process.

# Participative Decision Making

The process of asking people to help make decisions that affect them or work that they will carry out. This creates ownership for a decision and improves the likelihood that people will support a decision and be motivated to carry it out.

#### **Process**

An operation that changes material or information from one form to another. A process is a series of interrelated tasks that transform and add value to input thereby creating output.

# **Process Improvement**

Any activity designed to improve the quality, safety, cycle time, productivity, or cost of a process.

# **Quality Policy**

The formal expressions by top management about overall intentions and directions of an organization regarding quality, as defined by the customer.

#### **Senior Leaders**

The top administrator or executive of the organization and those managers who report directly to that person.

#### Services

Work done for others. The completion of a process that provides an intangible product which meets a particular customer need. Some workforce development services include job information and referral, training, and filling job orders.

# **Service Standard**

The desired achievement level for the measured performance of a service. Service standards should address key aspects of services including integrity, cost, and quality.

# The Self-Assessment System Overview

# **Strategic Planning**

A future-oriented process of defining the purpose and scope of an organization within which priorities are identified and broad goals are established. Such planning deals with the focus and thrust of an organization and its goals. The process of translating broad policies and goals into plans of action is sometimes considered to be operational planning.

# **Responsible Citizen**

The idea that every organization is a citizen in its local community and has opportunities for leadership, positive influence, and involvement in civic endeavors such as education, community services, and the environment.

#### Vision

A picture of what the future can look like. A motivating destination for an organization. To be meaningful and effective, a vision must be shared by all members of the organization.



Many thanks to all of our Simply Better! colleagues for their thoughtfulness and attention in reviewing our draft documents. Their initial comments helped to form the basis for this guide. Simply Better! team members are listed in the *Resources* section of the *Guidebook*.

Representatives of the Department of Labor national and regional offices provided countless creative ideas and critical comments which helped to improve this system. Their willingness to help create a learning network around Simply Better! will be felt, we hope, for years to come.

Staff from many employment and training organizations and programs provided comments and suggestions, which gave us a strong sense of what is important to our customers.

Many of the ideas in the Simply Better! Self-Assessment System are based on work done by the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, the President's Quality Award, the Oregon Quality Initiative, and the Florida Sterling Council. We thank them for their pioneering thinking on the self-assessment process.

Kiho Yi formatted the nine booklets of the S-A-S, and Malcolm Williams designed the icons. Both are students at The Art Institute of Seattle, and we hope that they were enriched by this school-to-work experience. We certainly learned from them.

Most of all, we are tremendously grateful for the hours, days, and weeks spent by the sixteen organizations from around the country who field tested our draft materials. The energy and commitment which they gave to conducting the field tests, and working with us in Seattle over four days to improve the S-A-S, will come through when future organizations use this system. Our experience of designing a product with our customers gave us a new understanding of the term 'Customer Focus'. It has been an invaluable lesson. The field test and observer organizations and their coordinators are also listed in the *Resources* section of the *Guidebook*.

# The Simply Better! Self-Assessment Team

U.S. Department of Labor Mike Brauser Rosemary Kafara-Cowan Barak Rosenbloom **State of Virginia** Pat Cummins

The Private Industry Council Dennis Cole Maureen Thompson

# The Simply Better! Team

There are five Simply Better! Product Development Teams from organizations around the country working with over 50 front-line agencies to guarantee the quality and ease-of-use of our products. The larger Simply Better! movement includes private industry councils, private sector service providers, employment service agencies, state agencies, community colleges, and the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. Active Simply Better! Team members are:

Jim Aaron, ETA National Office

Mike Brauser, ETA Seattle Regional Office

Barry Bridge, ETA Philadelphia Regional Office

Ann Cole, ETA Dallas Regional Office

Dennis Cole, The Private Industry Council, Portland Oregon

Liz Coley, Arbor, Inc.

Pat Cummins, The Governor's Employment and Training Department,

Kit Donahue, ETA Philadelphia Regional Office

Dana Durfee, ETA San Francisco Regional Office

Joe Fischer, ETA National Office

Anna Hall, ETA Dallas Regional Office

Nancy Hawkins, ETA Atlanta Regional Office

Doug Holl, The Enterprise

Bill Janes, ETA Seattle Regional Office

Rosemary Kafara-Cowan, ETA Seattle Regional Office

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Maureen Thompson, TPIC, Portland Oregon

# The Self-Assessment System Overview

# For More Information

If you would like to get a copy of the complete Self-Assessment System or more information about Simply Better!, or if you need assistance with your continuous improvement journey, please call or fax the Simply Better! representative at the nearest regional office of the Employment and Training Administration:

Boston

Ray Poet John Ladd 617-565-2243 fax 617-565-2229

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O Please send me a complete copy of the Simply Better! Self-Assessment System

O Please send me all future Simply Better! products

O Please keep me informed about Simply Better! events in my area

O Please call me to discuss Simply Better!

Name Organization Address Fax ( Phone Email

How did you hear about Simply Better!?

We want to hear your comments. Please call us or fax them along!

# If You're Still Not Convinced

The Self-Assessment System would look very different were it not for the tremendous work of the eight field test organizations and their observers. If you are still not sure whether the Self-Assessment System or continuous improvement is for you, please feel free to call any one of them!

# The Private Industry Council

Portland, Oregon Maureen Thompson 503-241-4600

Observer: Al Newman

Oregon Economic Development Department

# Mendocino Private Industry Council

Ukiah, California Charles Hall, Cindy Miller, Heidi Dunham 707-468-1196

Observer: Michael McCann Blue Shield/Mendocino PIC

# Job Opportunities in Nevada

Yerington, Nevada Becky Boatwright 702-463-2230

Observer: Jill Wells

Job Opportunities in Nevada

# KDK Private Industry Council

St. Charles, Illinois Colleen Murphy Klein 708-443-5351 x205

Observer: Jackie Bolger

Illinois Department of Employment Security

# PIC 5

Annandale, Minnesota Ellen Radel 612-231-5174

Observer: Kim Brubaken Pine Technical College

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# Private Industry Council of Pasco

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Citrus-Hernando Private Industry Council

# The Pentad Private Industry Council

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